Cruise Details

Name:	Holland & Belgium in Spring - Southbound
Reference:	TAUCKRHY202708042027
Operator:	Tauck
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	MS Joy
Regions:	Dutch Waterways
Departs On:	08 Apr 27
Departs From:	Amsterdam
Arrives On:	16 Apr 27
Arrives At:	Brussel (Bruxelles)
Cruise Nights:	8
Total Vacation Days:	9

Itinerary

Day 1: Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Tour begins: 4:00 PM, Amsterdam. Upon arrival, a transfer is included from Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport or Centraal Train Station directly to your Tauck riverboat. After settling into your cabin, attend a discovery briefing, then enjoy a welcome reception followed by dinner this evening aboard the riverboat.

Arrives On: 08 Apr 27

Day 2: Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Explore Amsterdam today, blending past with present, from its medieval core to the bustling shops, cafés and rich cosmopolitan life of a 21st-century European metropolis. Disembark for a choice of excursions; one takes you on guided canal boat cruise under the curved bridges and past merchants' homes along the 17th-century grachten (canals) of the city. The three main canals, dug during the Dutch Golden Age, form concentric belts around the city, and are resplendent with 1,550

monumental buildings. Your cruise ends with a guided tour of the Rijksmuseum to see works by the Old Dutch Masters, including Rembrandt, Vermeer, and Van Gogh. Alternatively, enjoy a full day excursion to the Dutch countryside, complete with a guided tour of a tulip and vegetable nursery. Your final choice offers a day of exploration in nearby Huizen (where your ship is docked). Your ship arrives early this evening in Enkuizen.

Arrives On: 09 Apr 27

Day 3: Brugge (Bruges) (Belgium)

Enter Enkhuizen - once one of the most important port cities in the Netherlands, today Enkhuizen retains much of that quaint charm and provides visitors with a crystal clear window into its maritime history and rich Dutch heritage. And what better way to acquaint yourself with that history than with a Tauck exclusive, early morning opening and guided visit of the Zuiderzeemuseum! Devoted to preserving the cultural heritage and maritime history of the old Zuiderzee region, you'll have the opportunity to explore the outdoor portion of its museum. Following lunch aboard the ship, set off on a choice of excursions. You'll have the choice between either a schooner cruise on Ijsselemeer Lake, where you'll help take part in working and running the 100-year-old sailboat, or, enjoy free time to explore Enkhuizen as you wish.

Arrives On: 10 Apr 27

Day 4: Rotterdam (Netherlands)

Disembark the riverboat for an excursion to Keukenhof Gardens in Lisse, the home of famous show gardens and millions of tulips, daffodils and hyacinths, in various stages of bloom and particularly beautiful at this time of the year. A rolling carpet of color, Keukenhof is one of Europe's most iconic – and fragrant – places to witness springtime in all its glory. Your visit here offers you a choice; One option has you explore the illustrious gardens on foot; the other takes you on a bike ride around the gardens (Note: this bike ride does not take place in the gardens) finishing with a bit of time to walk the gardens. After lunch ashore, return to the riverboat for an afternoon of cruising. This evening, travel to The Hague (the royal city of Den Haag to the Dutch), for a sparkling Tauck Exclusive evening featuring dinner, live music and a tour showcasing Dutch Golden Age paintings at the Mauritshuis, a renowned art museum housed in a historic 17th-century building.

Arrives On: 11 Apr 27

Day 5: Willemstad (Netherlands)

Today, arrive in the Dutch village of Kinderdijk, where 19 original 18th-century windmills – preserved today as a UNESCO World Heritage Site – create an iconic polderscape that's better than any picture-postcard, which you'll enjoy on a boat cruise. There's no other place in the world besides Kinderdijk where can you see so many historic windmills together in an authentic setting.

During your visit, discover how a windmill works both inside and out, and explore the quintessentially Dutch history of windmills. Alternatively, you can choose a bicycling excursion amidst the Kinderdijk windmills. Continue on to nearby Dordrecht, a historic island city bordering no less than five rivers in the South Holland province of The Netherlands. Reflecting the definition of the Dutch word for harbor – "haven" – the city's charming harbor district preserves many historic warehouses, merchants' mansions and quays, and its role as a major port city from the 15th to 18th centuries. A walking tour or a boat ride (your choice) reveals Dordrecht's notable architecture and monuments in its medieval inner city, as well as the surrounding ring of 19th-century buildings. Return to the ship for dinner and evening activities as your ship arrives in Rotterdam early this evening.

Arrives On: 12 Apr 27

Day 6: Gent (Ghent) (Belgium)

Welcome to Rotterdam, the second-largest city in the Netherlands and a centuries-old seaport that's among the largest and busiest in the world. After most of its historic center was obliterated during World War II, the city rose from the ashes to become the thriving commercial and transportation center it is today; renowned for its cutting-edge architecture and vibrant cultural life, 21st-century Rotterdam has been called the "Gateway to Europe." You can explore Rotterdam's stunning 21st-century Markthal (Markethall) and its contemporary culinary culture on your food-focused walking tour, or visit The Royal Delft pottery factory where generations of craftsmen have been making Delft Blue pottery by hand since 1653 for a painting workshop with master tile painters that includes high tea. Lunch today is aboard the riverboat followed by time to explore Rotterdam at your leisure before your ship departs for Belgium.

Arrives On: 13 Apr 27

Day 7: Antwerp (Belgium)

You're off on a choice of excursions this morning. One brings you to flemish city of Bruges, known as "the Venice of the North," for its canals and tiny medieval streets; have lunch in town. On your walking tour in cobblestoned, fairy tale-like Bruges, you'll feel like you've walked into a painting by Jan Van Eyck, who captured life in the city during its heyday in the 15th century. The hike up the stairs of the medieval bell tower is well worth the effort; you'll be rewarded with wonderful panoramic views. The other choice brings you to another flemish city, Ghent, for walking tour through its Old Town; the pedestrian-friendly cobblestoned town center feels like an outdoor museum of early Flemish architecture. Think about climbing to the top of the 14th-century belfry, crowned with a dragon, for the view – Ghent laid out before you is a visual feast of castles, churches, and historic merchants' houses. Be sure to try the local specialty, Ghent noses, a traditional raspberry candy sold at stands on the street – or a warm waffle with sugar or honey. Enjoy dinner onboard tonight as you sail on to Antwerp.

Arrives On: 14 Apr 27

Day 8: Brussel (Bruxelles) (Belgium)

Your riverboat arrives this morning in the major port city of Antwerp for a day in the capital of the Belgian province of Flanders. Take an orientation tour of the city and a guided walk through the city's historic center. As you stroll and hear stories and insights from your local guide, take in Grote Markt, the old market square and numerous restored merchants' houses, harkening back to the days of the 16th-century Age of Exploration when Antwerp – at the time a powerful center of international commerce – was the richest city in Europe. After lunch aboard ship, you'll have some free time to explore more of Antwerp on a choice of excursions. One option offers you a visit to the Red Star Line Museum, sharing the stories of the over two million passengers who traveled to America on Red Star Line ships. Your other choice explores Antwerp through beer! Take to the streets on a walking tour to a number of local pubs for samplings of typical Belgian beer varieties. Dinner tonight is aboard the ship.

Arrives On: 15 Apr 27

Day 9: Brussel (Bruxelles) (Belgium)

Tour ends: Brussels. Fly home anytime; all guests must disembark the riverboat by 9:00 AM. A transfer is included from the riverboat to Brussels Airport; allow 3 hours for flight check-in.

Arrives On: 16 Apr 27

For more information on this cruise, please call +44 (0)1202 767926.
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